

I am writing in response to the implementation of the common core and the new teacher evaluation system. First, I would like to say that this hearing should have been held when the teachers could have attended. I took the time to write this because I feel passionate about these issues.

I am a special education teacher in an urban district.

First, I would like to say that we need to have mandatory pre-K. Many students come to Kindergarten not knowing how to write their name or have any basic skills such as counting or colors. In urban districts we have many children that come to school without basic skills and those need to be taught first in order to teach the common core skills. My belief is that the common core should have started in Kindergarten and gone up through the grades with the students. The older students have not been exposed to the new way of teaching the common core and have learning one way of doing things and now they have to be re-taught how to do it the "common core way". The common core standards are very high for the regular education students so when the special education students try to work on these tasks they become very frustrated and discouraged. Even when the new test will adapt to the students levels, it will not adapt enough that the special education students will be able to feel successful.

The new teacher evaluation system is too much! What other profession are you evaluated and rated on everything that you say and do? What other profession do you have to give evidence of what you are doing to prove that you are doing your job? Aren't we professionals? All of the paperwork and evidence that needs to be uploaded is very time consuming. It takes away from having time to sort through the new curriculum and plan lessons for our students. The requirements of the evaluation system are different in each district. Some districts demand more than others. I happen to be in one of those districts. I am required to have 2 formal evaluations and 3 informal evaluations. All of which I am rated on. In addition, there are random walk throughs and SLO's that I have to keep track of. Some districts allow "exemplary", in my district we were told that no one is getting a rating of "exemplary". All of the differences in the districts are not fair across the state. In urban districts, there are more children in each classroom. There are also more children with emotional and behavioral difficulties. These teachers are rated the same way that the teachers in the suburbs are rated but have more to deal with each day. Please take all of these things into consideration.

I realize that this testimony is a little late but it is the first chance that I have had to write this. Thank you for its consideration.

Tracey Wilkins